

Making Appointments for Lobby Day!

Dear 2006 Lobby Day Participants,

Hello! Thank you for your interest in the Taking Action for Animals Lobby Day. We are looking forward to working with you for a successful lobbying experience. Although ideally it would be wonderful to meet with a legislator in person, in most cases you will be meeting with a member of the legislator's staff. Legislative staffers have tremendous influence over whether or not his/her boss will actively support a pro-animal bill. Therefore, a personal meeting with a legislative staff member is just as critical as meeting with the actual legislator.

Scheduling

As a part of your Lobby Day experience, it is your responsibility to call your legislator's offices and set up meetings. You should attempt to set up **3 meetings** total (one meeting with each Senator and one with your Representative). **Simply call (not e-mail) the office and request an appointment.** Please understand that each office functions uniquely; some offices may ask that you place your request for a meeting in writing.

Please keep the following tips in mind:

- Schedule your meeting between 11:30 am and 3:30 pm on Tuesday, September 5
- The average meeting will be 10-15 minutes long. The time it takes to walk between offices could be as much as 30 minutes. Plan accordingly.
- When speaking to the legislative office, be sure to mention that you are a constituent

Within each office on Capitol Hill, there are staffers that work on specific issues for legislators. When calling the office to set up your meeting, ask for the animal protection staffer.

Here is a basic phone script to give you a sense of what to say to a staffer:

“Hello, my name is _____, and I am a constituent of Senator/Representative _____. I will be in Washington, DC on Tuesday, September 5th, and I was wondering if I could meet with you briefly to discuss some general animal protection legislation with you.”

If the staffer says yes, be sure to make it a convenient time for you. If the animal protection staffer cannot meet with you, ask to meet with a different staffer.

When mentioning that you would like to discuss animal protection issues, it is best to start out really general. Our federal lobbyists will be working with you during the **Monday evening workshop (5:15-7:00pm)** to help you construct specific messages that would be most appropriate and effective for each staffer with whom you meet.

THE EARLIER YOU SCHEDULE THESE MEETINGS, THE BETTER! Call TODAY!

For your specific legislators' specific contact information, please visit

www.hsus.org/leglookup

We will be giving you more information to assist you in the actual appointments, don't worry. The main goal right now is to schedule these appointments.

If you run into problems or have any questions, please contact me at kdupps@hsus.org or (202) 955-3678.

I look forward to assisting you in any way that I can and of course seeing you on Tuesday, September 5th!

Sincerely,

Kelley Dupps
Grassroots Outreach Coordinator
The Humane Society of the United States
202-955-3678
kdupps@hsus.org



LOBBYING TIPS

HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE ANIMAL ADVOCATE

Know who represents you at all levels of government. Keep phone numbers and addresses handy, quick action! Help others do the same.

State a clear and concise objective. For example, say that you want to ban canned hunts (specific) -- not just that you want to stop outrageous hunting practices (too broad).

Identify yourself by name and organization (if any) when talking with an elected official.

Explain why this issue is important to you personally. If possible, link the issue to a personal experience or a situation in the elected official's district.

Get to know your elected officials. Make an effort to appear at their town meetings and other events and be sure they hear you ask at least one question on animal issues at each event.

Never lie to or mislead a legislator - especially to someone who is on your side and needs to know the truth about an issue. Trust is essential for a working relationship.

Be aware of previous actions the official has taken on behalf of animals. You can be sure the opposition is aware of the assistance he or she gave on our behalf.

Explain the meaning of terms that may be unfamiliar. For example, explain terms like "canned," "pound seizure," "class B dealers." Broad statements such as "hunting bears with hounds is inexcusable" may reflect how you feel, but doesn't convey a message as to what action needs to be taken by the official.

Explain how important it is for your elected officials to adequately fund animal programs -- ranging from local animal control, to state enforcement of wildlife protection laws, to enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act and others. Let them know that this is how you want your tax dollars spent.

Get to know & develop relationships with key people having influence over animals. For example, animal control officers, veterinarians, state wildlife board members, prosecuting attorneys, and health department officials have a major impact on animal protection bills. Legislators listen to their views so work with them whenever possible.

Join forces with other types of groups who may have the same position as you *even if for different reasons* - such as churches, teachers, chambers of commerce, local universities, or specific industries. Whenever appropriate, get school children to support your efforts.

Wear many hats - not just your animal advocate hat. When lobbying legislators, identify yourself as a parent, businessperson, campaign contributor, or fellow church/club/team member, etc.

Work with legislative staff. They often have more knowledge of the issues and its chances, can give you vital background on the legislation's outlook, and have extraordinary clout.

Get involved in legislative campaigns - as an individual, *not* a nonprofit group. Volunteer to work, place a campaign sign in your yard, hand out leaflets, or otherwise help get someone elected.

Develop a relationship with reporters, editors and editorial boards in local media outlets.

Do not threaten or antagonize a legislator. If this elected official opposes you, but respects and bears you no animosity, you may find common ground in the future on another issue. But if you make an enemy, that person may take extra steps to defeat the bill you support. A legislator who doesn't agree with you on wildlife issues may be great on companion animal issues and vice versa. Don't make enemies. Today's city council member can be tomorrow's governor.

Refer to bills by their numbers AND name. For example, "Please support SB 405, the Dog Protection Act".

Listen to elected officials' comments and questions on an issue. If they ask how a bill will impact jobs, or medical care, or the budget, you know where their concern is focused. Find ways to address those issues.

Explain terms or abbreviations that may be unfamiliar without explaining their meaning such as USDA, PETA, or even HSUS.

Sometimes we have to compromise. As long as such a change won't harm any animals, consider the situation carefully. Learn legislative strategies that might save a bill otherwise destined to die such as sunset provisions, grand fathering clauses, and placing provisions into regulation instead of a statute.

Thank someone who was helpful. Whenever possible, let your membership know how very helpful the person has been.

Respond to action alerts sent by The HSUS and other groups. When these are sent, legislation is usually close to passage or in a precarious position and your action can make a tremendous difference.

Support H.R. 503 / S. 1915 – American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act

Representatives John Sweeney (R-NY) and John Spratt (D-SC) and Senators John Ensign (R-NV) and Mary Landrieu (D-LA) have introduced **H.R. 503/S.1915, The American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act**. This legislation bans the slaughter of horses for human consumption and the domestic and international transport of live horses or horseflesh for human consumption. Congress passed an amendment to the FY2006 Agriculture Appropriations amendment by overwhelming and bipartisan majorities in both House (269-158) and Senate (69-28), however the United States Department of Agriculture has refused to implement even this temporary ban on horse slaughter. Passage of a permanent ban is necessary in order to protect American horses.

Horses are our trusted companions, a symbol of grace and beauty, and have contributed greatly to our society throughout history. Horses have never been raised for human consumption in America. However, American horses are being killed for the palates of overseas diners in Italy, France, Belgium, and Japan. Many thousands of live horses are also transported across the border to Canada for slaughter. Show horses, racehorses, foals born as a “byproduct” of the Premarin© industry (a female hormone replacement drug), wild horses, carriage horses, and family horses are victims of the horse slaughter industry. Thousands of horses are stolen every year for the horsemeat trade.

There are only three slaughterhouses in the US – all are foreign-owned. According to the USDA, more than 91,000 American horses were slaughtered in the U.S. in 2005. Another 25,000 are believed to have been shipped live to another country to be slaughtered for human consumption last year.

Where These Horses Come From

Many horses are unknowingly sold to slaughter, while many are stolen and sold for a profit. When California banned horse slaughter, horse theft decreased by 34%. Wild horses often are sold to slaughter. Logs from all three plants show that thousands of wild horses have been slaughtered in recent years. Irresponsible owners who wish to squeeze a final dollar from horses that have served them for years may seek to dispose their animals via slaughter. However, most are purchased at auction, where their former owners have no idea that they will be butchered. Sick, sore, lame, disabled, blind, and pregnant horses are legally trucked and slaughtered. Killer buyers and slaughterhouses try to suggest that all the horses they slaughter are old and past recovery. In truth, some horses may be sick or injured because of neglect but many more are sound and in good health.

A Brutal End

The cruelty of horse slaughter is not limited to the killing, but the entire process involves great suffering. Horses bound for slaughter plants are shipped, frequently over long distances, in inhumane conditions. They are typically given no food, water or rest. Terrified horses and ponies are commonly crammed together and transported to slaughter in double-deck trucks designed for cattle and pigs. The truck ceilings are so low that horses are not even able to hold their heads in a balanced position. Inappropriate floor surfaces cause slips and falls, and sometimes even trampling. Some horses arrive at the slaughterhouse seriously injured or dead.

Under federal law, horses are required to be rendered unconscious prior to slaughter, usually with a captive bolt pistol, which shoots a metal rod into the horse’s brain. Conditions in the slaughterhouse are stressful and frightening for horses. Horses are different from cattle due to their instinctive flight response in stressful conditions, making it difficult to accurately stun them prior to slaughter. Our undercover footage has shown that some horses are improperly stunned and are conscious when they are shackled and hoisted by a rear leg to have their throats cut. Death at the slaughterhouse is anything but a humane end for horses.

MYTHS AND FACTS REGARDING HORSE SLAUGHTER

Myth: The ban will lead to an increase in horse abuse and neglect cases.

Fact: A ban on horse slaughter will not lead to an increase in horse abuse and neglect. In California, where horse slaughter was banned in 1998, there has been no corresponding rise in cruelty and neglect cases. Horse theft has dropped by 34% since enactment of the ban. Allowing one's horse to starve is not an option – state anti-cruelty laws prohibit such neglect.

Myth: There is no need for this ban because slaughter is humane euthanasia.

Fact: Horse slaughter is a far cry from humane euthanasia. "Euthanasia" means a gentle, painless death provided in order to prevent suffering. Horse slaughter is a death fraught with terror, pain, and suffering. Horses are shipped for more than 24 hours at a time in crowded double-deck cattle trucks without food, water, or rest. Pregnant mares, foals, injured horses, and even blind horses must endure the journey. Once they arrive, their suffering intensifies – undercover footage obtained by The HSUS demonstrates that fully conscious horses are shackled and hoisted by the rear leg and have their throats slit. Because horses are skittish by nature, it is particularly difficult to align them correctly and ensure that the captive bolt stun gun renders them unconscious. When no other option exists, unwanted horses should be humanely euthanized by a licensed veterinarian rather than placed on a truck, cruelly transported and then butchered. Most horse owners already use humane euthanasia for their older or ill horses.

Myth: Transport guidelines prevent harm to horses shipped to slaughter.

Fact: The 2002 guidelines allow horses to be shipped for more than 24 hours without food, water or rest, with broken limbs, with eyes missing, even heavily pregnant. Industry successfully pushed to delay the prohibition on the use of double-decker trucks until December 7, 2006. The regulations cover only the final journey to the slaughterhouse. If horses are loaded and unloaded at various places as part of their route to slaughter, only the final leg of the trip is covered. Since the enforcement of these guidelines occurs only after the truck reaches the slaughter plant, these guidelines have little preventative effect and allow extreme suffering in transport to continue.

Myth: If horses can no longer be slaughtered, their welfare is at risk due to the lack of adequate equine rescue facilities and uniform standards for them.

Fact: Standards of care have already been developed and embraced by the hundreds of equine rescue and retirement facilities that exist throughout the country that routinely rescue horses from slaughter. All must comply with state and local animal welfare statutes. In an effort to end the slaughter of racehorses, the New York Racing Association has partnered with other groups to launch the "Ferdinand Fee" to raise funds for the care of retired racehorses, and to honor Ferdinand, a former Kentucky Derby winner sent to slaughter. The organizations leading the charge in favor of the Ensign-Byrd amendment are the very organizations that are actively working to provide sanctuaries and solutions for horses that would otherwise go to slaughter.

Myth: Ending horse slaughter will cause environmental harm.

Fact: Hundreds of thousands of horses are safely and humanely disposed of annually by means other than slaughter, and the infrastructure can absorb an increase in numbers. Conversely, the operation of the horse slaughterhouses has a very real negative environmental impact, with two out of the three in violation of current environmental law related to the disposal of blood and other waste materials.

Myth: If this legislation is enacted, the federal government will face the financial burden of care for horses no longer going to slaughter.

Fact: This assertion rests on the false premise that all horses currently going to slaughter would become the financial responsibility of the federal government. Horse owners, not the government, will remain responsible for the care of their horses. Owners who no longer wish to keep their horses and who cannot sell or place their horses in a new home will have the option of humane euthanasia. The average cost for veterinarian-administered euthanasia and carcass disposal – approximately \$225, the cost of one month's care – is simply a part of responsible horse ownership.